

Thanks to all of you who are interested in Dutch Oven Cooking

It is all about

Good Food

Good Friends

Good Fun

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You can join them by going to

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# A Beginners Guide to the Wonders Of Dutch Oven Cooking

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## Introduction

Dutch oven cooking or cast iron cooking as some call it, has a colored past. From AD times through the history of the world to our current times where pioneers used the Dutch oven as their main cooking pot as they settled the American Continent. That continues today with it being a staple for many who like to camp to our Girl and Boy Scouts who use these Dutch ovens to make sure hungry bellies don't stay hungry for long.

This form of cooking turns out the best food that you will every eat in your life time. However, Dutch oven cooking in our day and age is not just about cooking food and having a great meal. It is about friends, family, and neighbors. It is about getting together and enjoying the company, camaraderie, and friendships while the aroma of great food wets the appetite of everyone around. It is about having fun while you cook and sharing your love for Dutch oven cooking with others.

This little booklet is about us sharing our love of Dutch oven cooking with you. Whether we are in a class together, or you just got this from a friend, you will never find finer people and more friends than you will in a group of people that love Dutch oven cooking.

At this point, I should note that this is written from one cook's point of view. As you get involved with others, you will learn additional tips and tricks. The saying goes that if you meet 10 Dutch oven cooks, you will hear 10 different ways to do things. I have tried to keep an open mind and present multiple views in the text below but I am still only one Dutch oven cook. The most important thing is that you try it, have fun, experiment, develop your own style, and always be open for new ideas. After cooking for ten years and winning the 2001 World Championship Dutch Oven Cook Off, I still learn new things about Dutch oven cooking every day.

So, enjoy as we cover the following topics.

## Topics

History of Dutch oven cooking

What's available in Dutch oven equipment

What you will need

Preparing, Cooking, Cleaning and Caring

Recipes to get you started

## History

First off, let's get the famous question of 'what is a Dutch oven' out of the way. Manufacturers use the term "Dutch Oven" for a cast iron or aluminum pot with a smooth bottom and dome shaped lid with dimples on the bottom side of the lid that acts as a self-basting feature because as steam rises to the lid, it collects and drips off the dimples back on to the food.

Conversely, a "Camp Oven" has legs on the bottom and a slightly curved lid with a lip all the way around the top to facilitate putting charcoal or fire embers underneath and on top of the oven respectively. Typically the DO is used in a conventional oven or on a stove top. The camp oven is designed for cooking with alternative heat sources such as wood or charcoal briquettes. In the Western United States, the term "Dutch Oven" has evolved to mean any outdoor cooking pot made of cast iron or aluminum.

Besides being an ideal heat conductor, cast iron heats evenly and consistently. This heat retention quality of cast iron allows for even cooking temperature without hot spots. When well seasoned and after good use, a cast-iron pan will form a stick resistant coating called a Patina.

It is reported that cooking in Cast Iron has been documented back to the BC times. In these times, they had pots big enough to throw a whole animal in. After boiling the animal for hours and hours they would strip the meat off and then take the bones out. Once the fat has solidified, they would skin it off and save it. The rest of the drippings were used as broth to make soups and stews. Once stored, the grease and fat was thrown back in and the ashes from the fire were added to make soap (This raises the question about using soap in your cast iron which we will cover later in this text).

While I'm not exactly sure when the Dutch oven pot was invented in the fashion that we know it as today, many people often ask where the oven got its name. There are two stories and it is unknown as to which one is true. The first story proposes that it was named the Dutch oven by the English because the casting method that they used to cast the pots came from the Dutch. The second story says that many of the pan peddlers that sold

## History

pots and pans in the early times of the settlement of the American continent were of Dutch descent and so the pots became known as the Dutch oven.

Regardless of the origin of the name, the Dutch oven is an amazing cooking pot that can be used to mimic any cooking environment that we have short of a microwave oven. It can bake, roast, stew, fry, and sauté virtually any food. You can cook basic meals that the pioneers have to the most gourmet recipe served at any five star restaurant today.

Cast iron is also a very forgiving cooking pot, it retains heat very well and evens it out so that it helps you to cook evenly and thoroughly until your food is precisely done to perfection. With that, let's find out what you need and how to cook.

There are many different cookware items made in Cast iron. A couple of manufacturers are even making Cast Iron wrapped in enamel for in-home kitchen use. There about 7 to 9 manufactures of Dutch ovens today.

There are also many different cast iron cookware items that are made in cast iron that are not Dutch ovens. In this text however, we will concentrate mainly on the kitchen and camp Dutch oven pots that are round with a lid.



## What's Available in Dutch Oven Equipment

What types of ovens are there? In no particular order:

### Lodge Manufacturing

Located in South Pittsburg, TN, this manufacturer is most familiar to many as they have been manufacturing ovens since 1896. They make many different pieces of cast iron cookware but as we are concentrating on Dutch Ovens, I have listed what they manufacture below.

Size (diameter)	Capacity (quarts)	Depth (inches)	How many can be served (estimated)
5 Inch	0.5	Approx. 2.5	1 to 2 people
8 Inch	2	3	4 to 6 people
10 Inch	4	3.5	10 to 12 people
12 Inch Shallow	6	3.75	12 to 18 people
12 Inch Deep	8	5	12 to 20 people
14 Inch Shallow	8	3.75	16 to 20 people
14 Inch Deep	10	5	16 to 24 people
16 Inch	12	4.25	20 to 28 people

For a full line of their products go to [www.lodgeinfo.com](http://www.lodgeinfo.com) or call them at 423-837-7181.

### CampChef

Located in Logan, UT, CampChef is best known for their propane camp cooking stoves. Around 1999, CampChef acquired the rights to the Ultimate Dutch oven which was invented by Dent Sorenson from Salina, Utah. Since then CampChef has expanded their line of cast iron cookware into three different variations of the oven and other cookware items.

## What's Available in Dutch Oven Equipment

Size (diameter)	Capacity (quarts)	Depth (inches)	How many can be served
<u>Classic</u> - this model is a camp oven identical to the Lodge and other generic ovens found on the market (it is rumored that they will also soon have a 16 inch)			
10 Inch	4	3.5	10 to 12 people
12 Inch	6	3.75	12 to 18 people
14 Inch	8	3.75	16 to 20 people

Ultimate - this model is the one that was invented by Dent Sorenson. It has a lid that can be inverted and used as a fry pan. It also has a cone in the center that is open to the bottom to allow heat from under the oven to circulate into the oven in a convection style. It is a camp style oven. You can also buy this oven in aluminum.

Size (inches)	Lid Depth (inches)	Lid Capacity (quarts)	Base Depth (inches)	Base Capacity (quarts)	How many can be served
14 (12.75 actual)	2.5	3.5	5	6	16 to 20 people

Dutch Oven - this model is styled like the Ultimate but without the cone in the center and the lid depth are shallower. It is a camp style oven.

Size (inches)	Lid Depth (inches)	Lid Capacity (quarts)	Base Depth (inches)	Base Capacity (quarts)	How many can be served
5 (5.5 actual)	5/8	1/8	2 3/8	1/2	1 to 2 people (can also be bought as a candle)
10 (11.5 actual)	1	1 1/8	4	5	12 to 14 people
12 (12.75 actual)	1 3/8	2 1/3	4 1/2	7	14 to 16 people

### What's Available in Dutch Oven Equipment

14 (13.75 actual)	1 7/8	2 3/4	5	9 1/8	16 to 20 people
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Specialty Oven - these models are designed for specific use.

Size (inches)	Lid Depth (inches)	Lid Capacity (quarts)	Base Depth (inches)	Base Capacity (quarts)	How many can be served
Ultimate Roaster	4 1/2	8 1/2	6 3/4	12 1/4	Has the cone in center with no legs. Holds up to a 20 lb. turkey standing up over the cone. Also does ribs and fish.

To see all CampChef's products go to [www.campchef.com](http://www.campchef.com) or call them at 1-800-560-2433.

### MACA

This manufacturer is located in Springville, UT and specializes in bigger deeper Dutch ovens and oval shaped ovens. All of these ovens have a picture on the lid. MACA will also personalize your oven by casting up to 20 characters, depending on the size ordered, on the top of the lid for an minimal fee.

Oval Ovens - these models are oval in shape and are camp style ovens. All but the largest size has a divider plate that fits down the center to divide the pot into two different sections. These ovals are perfect for poultry.

Size (inches)	Depth (inches)	Capacity (quarts)	Design on Lid	Weight (lbs)	How many can be served (estimate)
8 by 12	7	8	Ram	32	10 to 25 people
10 by 14	8	14	Longhorn	45	28 to 60 people
12 by 16	9	20	Elk	62	40 to 85 people

### What's Available in Dutch Oven Equipment

Dutch Ovens - these models are camp style ovens with large capacities. These are definitely where cooking with friends becomes an advantage as you have someone to help you lift the pot. All but the largest of these ovens are also sold in aluminum.

Size (inches)	Depth (inches)	Capacity (quarts)	Design on Lid	Weight (lbs)	How many can be served (estimate)
9	6	5	Eagle	18 Cast	8 to 20 people
11	6 1/2	9	Buffalo	26 Cast	10 to 30 people
13	6 1/2	12	Deer	40 Cast	15 to 44 people
15	7 1/2	18	Fly Fishing	46 Cast	20 to 60 people
17	9	29	Deer	67 Cast	35 to 100 people
22	9 1/2	45	Pioneer	160 Cast	60 to 180

See all of these MACA products at [www.macaovens.com](http://www.macaovens.com) or call at 801-489-3663.



## GSI Outdoors

GSI is the only strictly aluminum manufacturer we have on the list. They are located in Spokane Valley, WA and product many accessories for camping.

Dutch Ovens - made in both in plan aluminum and hard anodized aluminum. The smallest comes in the kitchen style oven while the other two come in a camp style.				
Size (inches)	Depth (inches)	Capacity (quarts)	Weight	How many can be served (estimate)
10		2	3 lb. 10 oz.	4 to 6 people
12		5	6 lb. 9.7 oz.	8 to 16 people
14		8	9 lb.	14 to 28 people

To see GSI Dutch ovens go to [www.gsioutdoors.com](http://www.gsioutdoors.com) or call 1-800-704-4474.

## Other Generics

These manufacturers come under names like Texsport, Sandsport, or sometimes have no name at all. These manufacturers usually have the same sizes as the Lodge and CampChef Classic ovens. Most are camp style will thinner and more uneven casting compared to the higher quality ovens described above. However, they are also about half the cost. I will not list them here because of the common size already documented above.

## What Do You Need

### **What size ovens should I buy?**

This happens to be one of the most common questions that are asked by beginning Dutch oven cooks. There is not one specific answer because it depends on how many you will be cooking for. Most people start out with a 10 and 12 inch if they are cooking for smaller numbers. Others start with 12 and 14 inch ovens if they plan on cooking for a larger amount of people like at a family reunion or out camping with friends.

The key is to estimate the smallest number of people you will cook for and the highest number. Then figure out the average or the number you will cook for most of the time. Buy ovens that will allow you cook for the higher limit if the ovens are full and the lower number if you don't fill the ovens up very full. Then the average should take care of itself.

A 12" deep (8 qt) feeds approximately 24-28 people, depending on what you are making in it. A 12" regular (6 qt) feeds 16-20. This holds true of stew, soups, chili, etc. The 12" regular DO is the most popular size. Dutch oven recipes are typically written for this size oven and other recipes are easily adapted because it has the same capacity as a 9" by 13" casserole pan.

### **How many ovens do I need?**

This also is a matter dependent on the amount of people you are cooking for. If you high number from the question above is a lot, then you can reach that number by buying more ovens instead of one large oven. We generally suggest to most people they start out with two to three ovens. This will allow you to cook a main dish and dessert or a main dish, side dish and dessert. One thing to remember, "Dutch Oven Cooking is a Social Event".

### **Should you buy a cast iron or aluminum Dutch ovens?**

This is also a matter of choice. I have listed the pros and cons to cast iron and aluminum below.

What do you need?

Cast Iron is an iron-carbon alloy, cast into shape, containing 2 to 4.5 percent carbon, 0.5 to 3 percent silicon, and lesser amounts of sulfur, manganese, and phosphorus. It is cast into a hard, brittle, nonmalleable form in a sand cast.

- Advantages
  - Retains heat very well.
  - Slowly heats up and slowly cools down.
  - Is lifetime cookware.
  - Is very forgiving, not easy to burn food, no hot spots.
- Disadvantages
  - Rusts easily.
  - Is heavy.
  - Not dishwasher safe.

Aluminum is an element in and of itself. When mixed for casting it forms a strong lightweight metal alloy with high conductive and thermal properties.

- Advantages
  - Conducts heat very well.
  - Is lightweight.
  - Does not rust.
  - Dishwasher safe.
- Disadvantages
  - Heats up quick and cools off quick.
  - Not forgiving, easier to burn or have hot spots.

Hard core Dutch oven cooks will tell you there is nothing but cast iron when it comes to Dutch oven cooking. Undeniably, the food out of the cast iron Dutch ovens are wonderful but the answer to the question is simply what you need if for. Barring the health claims against Aluminum, it is often chosen when weight is an issue and you need a lighter pot.

Whether you buy a kitchen or camp oven is also dependent on what you will use it for. If it will only be used inside the home then a kitchen oven is better for your use. If you will only use it camping, then a camp oven is better. In between these opposites is a large spectrum of uses and

What do you need?

priorities that will help you decide which style of oven you want. It is however appropriate to note that you can use a camp oven on your stove top and oven in the home as well. If you have a stove top that you don't want scratched, then you can use a wok ring to lift the oven above the stove top so that the leg will not touch. Inside the oven, you can stick the legs through your oven rack and it will sit just fine. On the opposite side, you can use a kitchen oven out camping by using a lid stand to raise it above the coals or charcoal and then you can use rolled up aluminum foil or a chain to ring around the lid to hold the coals and charcoal in place. Just be aware that when you lift the lid that the dust does not fall into your food. A little bit of camp pepper is okay but too much makes any food gritty and hard to chew.

### What else do I need to cook in the Dutch Oven?

Below, I have listed some of the equipment that is nice to have when you cook in the Dutch oven. This is oriented to cooking outside but some of the tools also apply to cooking inside.

#### Cook Table

A cook table is nice to have and is a back saver when the alternative is cooking on the ground. These tables are made out of steel that is usually powder coated or heat painted and stand anywhere from 18 to 30 inches above the ground. You can put your coals or charcoal on the table, set your Dutch Oven over them and add the coals to the top. These tables will usually hold 2 to 3 Dutch ovens.

#### Propane Stove

Another table that is nice to have is a propane cook stove. These stoves allow you to cook with bottom heat similar to a stove top without the fuss of charcoal or fire coals. A tripod with a Dutch oven hanging over a camp fire can achieve the same results. If you are short on money, you can buy a piece of sheet metal cut just right to sit on the top of one of these stoves to create a cook table as described above.



Gloves

A pair of welding gloves or high heat tolerant gloves helps to protect your hands against the hot Dutch oven.

Lid Lifter

A lid lifter is a tool to hook onto the lid and lift it without touching the lid. You can use tools like a claw hammer or a pair of pipe pliers to accomplish this or you can purchase one of many styles of these lifters on the market. CampChef includes one in every oven that they sell. In many a Dutch oven cooks opinion, the best lid lifter on the market was invented and made by Mair Lid Lifters out of Heber City, UT. This lifter uses your normal gripping action to clamp onto the lid in such a way that you can lift the lid upside down with total control. For further information on this lifter you can go to [www.mairdutchovenlifter.com](http://www.mairdutchovenlifter.com) or call them at 435-654-0556 or 435-654-3607.

Charcoal Starter

If you will be using charcoal, you will need a charcoal starter or basket. There are many starters on the market that will allow you to start the charcoal with newspaper underneath the starter. Often called a chimney starter it takes about 20 minutes to start charcoal in these devices. If you buy one of these, look for a wider model rather than a narrow taller version. The narrow taller ones tend to have the bottom charcoal half spent by the time the top charcoal gets going.

An alternative way to start charcoal is with a charcoal basket. These usually have a wider diameter than a chimney and are shallower. They go over the top of a propane burner on a propane stove and start charcoal within a matter of 5 minutes.

Wind Guard

If you are cooking outside, it is always good to have something that will block the wind from blowing against your Dutch oven and carrying the heat to one side. There are many devices both retail and home made that can be

used. A favorite of this author's is a roll of 10 inch aluminium roof flashing cut into about 5 1/2 foot lengths. You can roll them up and unroll them to any size by using a small black binder clip to hold them. Then you just put it around your Dutch oven and the wind can no longer cause problems with your heat control.

Oil or conditioner

Your initial seasoning whether from the factory or from you putting it on is the start of building up the patina on your Dutch oven. You will need to continue to use oil, animal fat or CampChef Conditioner to protect and build up this seasoning. It will only get built up through using the Dutch oven and we will discuss this topic further in the Caring for you oven section.

Other tools

- Shovel to scoop up the charcoal and dust
- Scraper to get the stuck on food off.
- Lid stand to hold you lid above the group and/or charcoal
- A diffuser plate to sit between the propane burner and your oven. This reduces the concentrated heat on the bottom of you oven.
- Moisture Managers allow you to gap the lid of your Dutch oven when cooking a recipe that requires the moisture to escape from the food and out of the oven. The author has developed some of these and if you are interested, you can contact them with the information on the back cover.



### **Preparing: Seasoning**

All Dutch ovens must be seasoned to protect the metal from rust. All of CampChef's products are now sold pre-seasoned and are termed as their Advantage line. Lodge also has a pre-seasoned line called Lodge Logic.

These ovens are nice because all you have to do is wash them out and start to use them. You must still build up the seasoning to obtain a good patina but at least these first steps are done for you.

All the other ovens must be seasoned before you use them. Most of the generic ovens and the older Lodge and CampChef ovens have a wax coating on them to protect them from moisture and rust during shipping and storage. MACA ovens do not have this coating and aluminum ovens do not need to be seasoned. To season an oven follow these steps.

1. If there is a wax coating, remove it by washing in very hot, soapy water or burn off the wax in a BBQ (you can do this in an oven but it will smoke up the house).
2. Dry the Dutch oven by wiping it and then putting it in an oven or BBQ over a heat source for 5 to 10 minutes. This opens the pores in the metal, dries them out, and prepares them to accept a coating of oil.
3. Coat the inside and outside of the oven with a vegetable oil, animal fat or the CampChef Conditioner product.
  - a. Which oils or fats are best? You should use a low-flash-point oil or animal fat because you are burning the oil into the metal to develop that protective coating. Bacon grease, lard, and Crisco have the lowest flash point at around 400 degrees. We have used the CampChef Conditioner, which is a Palm-oil based mixture for the last five years. Seasoning at 550 degrees with this product produces a beautiful black patina from the very first coating.
4. Bake in your oven or BBQ upside down or over a heat source for 1 hour. The heat should be higher than the flash point because to season means

to change the oil or fat to carbon and seal it, or as we like to say burn it, onto the metal. If you don't do this, you will eventually lose your seasoning in the future as it will begin to flake off and you will have to start over.

5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 if more than one coat is desired (we would suggest two to three coats)

6. After the last hour of the last coat you applied, turn off the oven and leave the Dutch oven in the oven until it cools down.

Through said experience, it has been shown that if you cook below the flash point of the oil or fat you are using, your seasoning will come out golden or sometimes black but the first time you cook at a higher temperature the seasoning will begin to bubble and flake off. We will cover how to start over again in the caring section of this topic.

### **Cooking**

The first key to cooking in a Dutch oven is the same as cooking in your oven or on your stove top at home - temperature control. If you know how to control the temperature in your Dutch oven, you can cook anything.

The second key is to mimic how you cook at home. For example, if you cook on the stove top at home, you are using bottom heat so you use bottom heat on your Dutch oven. If you cook in the oven at home, you are using even heat all around the container you are cooking in and so for the Dutch oven you would use heat all around by placing a heat source under and on top to evenly heat the Dutch oven.

Keep in mind the following:

### **Roasting & Baking:**

The heat source should come from the top and bottom. This is usually done with more heat on the top of the oven than on the bottom so as to equal out the heat in the oven itself. If you think about it, heat rises so we need more heat on the top than on the bottom to compensate for the rising of the heat away from the top of the oven.



**Frying, Boiling, Stewing, Simmering, Steam Roasting:**

All of the heat should come from the bottom if using a higher heat source. Other heat sources may require some top heat to keep the cooking going.

Now wasn't that easy. So you are ready to cook. But first you want to know how to control the temperature right?

At home - if you are cooking at home it is easy because you just turn the dial on the stove or oven to the desired temperature, put your food in and away you go.

Out camping - here it becomes a little more complicated unless you have a camper with a stove and stove top. However, it is easier than you think depending on your heat source.

- Campfire is the most difficult heat source to cook with because every type of wood burns differently and the woods moisture content also affects the way it burns. Therefore, about the only way is to put the wood coals underneath if you want bottom heat or both on the bottom and top if you want top and bottom heat and then watch it. You will have to lift the lid and judge if it is cooking too fast or too slow and adjust the amount of coals.

- Charcoal Briquettes are probably the easiest heat source to cook with because you can control the temperature very well with these briquettes. Below is a chart that tells you how to control your temperature in a Dutch oven with charcoal briquettes (this works for all Dutch ovens except for MACA). This will give you 325 degrees in your oven.

Size	Even Heat (baking, etc.)		Bottom Heat (frying, etc.)	
	Bottom	Top	Bottom	Top
8 inch	5	12	12	5

10 inch	7	13	13	7
12 inch	9	15	15	9
14 inch	11	17	17	11
16 inch	13	19	19	13

This is one of those areas where if you talk to other Dutch oven cooks you will get a number of different answers. Even Lodge has a different formula on their web site; however, to keep it simple, I have found that this seems to work quite well. The rule of thumb is that you take the diameter of the oven and double it. For example, for a 10 inch Dutch oven, 20 briquettes will give you 325 degrees. For even heat like baking you put three more on top than on the bottom. For bottom heat, you put three more on the bottom than the top. Every two coals after that will increase you temperature 25 degrees.

You should note at this point that this formula is only a starting place, it is affected by the outside temperature, wind, and other conditions. For the larger MACA ovens, use the diameter just as in the formula above but add three additional coals underneath and six additional coals on top to get the desired 325 degrees.

**Placement of Coals**

This is another area where there are as many different ideas as there are cooks. It is however recommended by most that you place the briquettes under the oven in a circle about the same size as the bottom of the oven. Many say not to put any under the oven and this is advisable unless you move all the briquettes that form the circle out so that they are halfway under the oven and half outside of the oven. In this case you can put one briquette in the center under the oven but use caution because this may cause your food to burn in the center.

On the lid put briquettes around the outside of the lid and then a few around the center. Many cooks will tell you not to put any coals in the



center of the lid but I have seen a lot of bread cooked in the Dutch oven with sunken centers because the heat was not concentrated equally enough across the lid.

Another belief is that you have to rotate the oven one direction and the lid the opposite direction every fifteen minutes to avoid hot spots. If you will space your briquettes fairly evenly and because cast iron is very forgiving, this is unnecessary. However if you have a breeze with no wind guard or something else that is pushing your heat to one side of you oven, it is wise to do this rotation method.

Charcoal briquettes last about two hours but in the second hour the heat quality of the briquette is not very good so for recipes that take more than an hour to an hour and fifteen minutes, we suggest your change to a new set of briquettes to finish the cooking.

### What should you cook?

The best recipes are the ones you like to eat. The capacity of a 12 inch Dutch oven is very comparable to a 9 by 13 inch casserole pan so that will give you some indication of the size. Your food can be prepared in the Dutch oven the same way as in your normal cooking at home. In the last section of this book there are a number of ideas for recipes and some basic recipes that you can change to make your own to get started with.

### Cleaning

Now that your bellies are full, it comes time to do the worst part of the cooking cycle and that is cleaning. The first rule to cleaning a Dutch oven is to do it while it is still warm. Do not let food sit in the Dutch oven for a long time. To clean out a Dutch oven,

1. Empty out the food and lightly scrape off the food that sticks to the Dutch oven. Wipe any remaining food out of the oven.
2. Wash out the oven with hot water. Some will say that you should not use any soap in a Dutch oven. With technology today and the abundance of hot water, you can use a little soap if you would like. Use a wash cloth,

paper towel, or something not abrasive to wash out the oven and any remaining food.

3. Rinse out the oven.
4. Dry with a wash cloth or paper towel.
5. Then immediately turn upside down over a heat source to warm the oven up, open the pores up in the metal and dry them out.
6. Let the oven cool and store.

**Storage Tips:** If you live in a humid area you may want to wipe the oven down with a very light coat of oil to protect it from condensation and potential rust. If you do this, it is wise to put something between the lid and the pot so that as the oil dries, the lid does not stick to the oven. It is always advisable to put a paper towel or something inside the oven to collect any moisture that may occur from condensation or humidity. Also, if you store it this way, what I call 'storing it wet', you will need to smell your oven before the next use to make sure the oil did not go rancid during storage. The CampChef Conditioner product claims not to have a problem with rancidity like some oils. If it does go rancid, heat up the oven until it is hot or boil some water in it to get rid of the rancid oil. If you live in a dry climate, you can store your Dutch oven without oiling it, what I call 'storing it dry' and then it is ready to use the next time you need it.

There are also other methods of cleaning, like using a mixture of 1 part apple cider vinegar to 3 parts water. This is sprayed on the oven and then the oven is wiped out. If all the food is not removed the oven is sprayed again, heated up and wiped out. This is repeated until the oven is totally clean and then the oven is heated up again to dry it out.

There are also some that recommend turning your oven upside down on a camp fire and burning the food out. This also removes your seasoning so it is not advised. Additionally some say to use salt or sand to clean you oven and while salt causes a chemical reaction that makes it so your food won't stick, both can scratch up your seasoning.



## Recipes

As mentioned before, the best recipes are those that you like to cook. You can use the Dutch oven just like your pots at home to cook up your favorite recipes. However, to help you get started, we have provided some of these basic recipes.

### **Main Dishes**

#### Pizza

You can buy frozen or take and bake pizza and put it in the dutch oven and cook it according to the instructions.

#### Mountain Man Breakfast

This basic recipe starts with hash browns, eggs and cheese and your choice of a meat like sausage, bacon or ham. Then you add whatever else you would like for vegetables. Mix the hash browns, eggs, and cheese together. Cook the meat and then add it to the mixture. Put the mixture in a Dutch oven and bake until the hash browns and eggs are cooked. One tip is to use frozen hash browns that already have peppers and onions in them.

#### Pepsi Chicken

This recipe is chicken breasts or thighs or both with one bottle of Pepsi (around 16 oz.) and a medium bottle of ketchup. Mix it all together and cook until the sauce begins to thicken. Variations are to add anything additional in ingredients and seasonings you would like to add. We like to add peppers and onions and some basic seasoning.

#### Bread

- Use frozen dough and follow the instructions. This is one my family likes.
- 20 frozen dinner rolls half way unfrozen. Cut in half dip in melted butter and arrange in the bottom of the Dutch oven.
- Sprinkle any seasoning you like, we like McCormick's Garlic and Herb seasoning, over the rolls,
- Cover with bacon bits and cheese
- When they have finished raising double, cook at 350 for about one hour.

## Recipes

Variations that you can use are cinnamon and sugar or dry butterscotch pudding to create a sweet roll.

### **Dessert**

Pie is the simplest thing in the world. Just pick up a pie from your frozen food section of the market and put it in the Dutch oven and cook according to the instructions. You will be the hit of the party with pie from the Dutch oven.

Upside down Pineapple Cake is also very simple. Melt a cup of brown sugar with a cube (half a cup) of butter in a sauce pan. Pour into the bottom of a Dutch oven. Put pineapple rings in the bottom (you can add cherries or nuts) and then pour a cake mix over the top that you have mixed up according to the cake instructions. Bake for about an hour at 350. When done, turn out on a platter and enjoy.

Cobbler is the all time favorite dessert from a Dutch oven. There are a number of different ways to do cobbler so I am listing my favorite but you can experiment until you find the way you like.

Put a couple cans of pie filling in the bottom of a Dutch oven. Mix up a cake mix and pour over the top of the pie filling. Cook at 350 for about one hour.

Variations include any pie filling and cake you would like to put together. Some favorites are cherry with a chocolate cake, apple with a spice cake, or our favorite, raspberry and blackberry with French vanilla cake. As you mix and match you can use real fruit and not mix up the cake mix or use soda pop as the liquid to mix up the cake with. The possibilities are many.